

SITUATION REPORT NO. 31
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: APRIL 26, 1997 TIME: 12:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.

2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: A volunteer sustained a broken ankle while participating in sandbagging operations in the city of Pembina. A Coast Guard helicopter crew evacuated him to the Cavalier hospital. To date, seven people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.

3. DAMAGES: The National Weather Service has downgraded its predicted crest for the Red River at Pembina as flood waters spread wide across the northern Red River Valley. This spread decreases the river volume, but increases the likelihood of overland flooding. Forecasters predict that the volume of water will be the largest amount that has ever passed through the Canadian border. Revised forecasts call for the river to crest on April 27-28 at 56 feet, approximately two feet lower than previously expected. The river level at Pembina was 54.9 feet on April 26, a 0.10-foot increase during the past 24 hours.

The Red River at Drayton appears to have crested at 45.55 feet on April 25, and had

receded to 45.34 feet on April 26. Flood stage is 32 feet. The river at Grand Forks was at 50 feet at 4 a.m. on April 26, a 2.62-foot difference from the previous day. The river had crested at 54.2 feet on April 22; flood stage is 28 feet. The river at Fargo measured 35.8 feet, a 0.24-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. The river had crested at 39.64 feet on April 18; flood stage is 17 feet. Farther upstream in Wahpeton, the river was at 15.88 feet, a .72-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. The river at Wahpeton had crested on April 4 at 19.2 feet; flood stage is 10 feet.

While working to elevate the city of Pembina's levee system, sandbagging crews were also repaired boils on dikes. One boil required reinforcement with 20,000 sandbags.

In Grand Forks, where recovery efforts are underway, preliminary estimates by officials indicate that three neighborhoods experienced total destruction. County emergency management officials received two reports of basement walls collapsing because water was pumped out of homes too quickly. On April 24-25, 350 evacuees had stayed at the Grand Forks Air Force Base shelter. The N.D. Department of Health reports that no illnesses or major injuries have been reported thus far in American Red Cross shelters or in Grand Forks. City and county officials are working to relocate flood-displaced residents to areas closer to Grand Forks. A preliminary estimate by officials shows the need for 100 temporary housing units. Officials have identified two locations with sewer and water access and adequate space to house a temporary housing development.

To date, a total of 20,538 North Dakotans have called the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) National Teleregistration Center to register for Individual Assistance.

The N.D. Department of Human Services (DHS) has received emergency food stamp applications for 900 households, representing a total of 2,700 people. As of April 25, DHS has paid \$225,000 thus far.

Officials in northeast North Dakota were trying to identify the location of two Grafton adults with whom no one has had contact since April 20 when they headed home from Stephen, MN, via Pembina.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: The State/Federal Donations Coordination Center has received a total of 1,372 calls during the past four days from callers offering cash, goods and services. Additional staff from Ohio, Louisiana and Missouri was scheduled to arrive April 25.

The American Red Cross provided 7,111 meals and shelter for 649 flood victims on April 24-25. To date, 106,957 meals have been served and 4,945 people stayed at Red Cross shelters. The agency is operating five shelters and plans to open a sixth in the Turtle Mountain area.

In Walsh County, local volunteers are operating food collections, clothing drives and other relief efforts to meet the needs of evacuees.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich visited Grand Forks April 25 to tour the area and discuss federal disaster assistance programs with Governor Schafer, local leaders and area business people. President Clinton visited the area earlier this week and proposed to Congress an additional \$488 million in supplemental disaster assistance for North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota.

In Pembina County, night boat patrols by local law enforcement began the evening of April 25 to prevent unauthorized people from entering the city.

Restoration of Grand Forks water treatment plant continues to be a top priority for recovery efforts as city and contractor crews began pumping flood waters away from the facility on April 25. A contractor will be replacing flood-damaged motors, while plumbing and electrical contractors help city crews restore the water system. Three N.D. Department of Health employees are providing technical assistance. Crews found a reservoir containing 800,000 gallons of clean water, which could be used for scrubbing the water plant. Restoration of water service to the city system will begin west of Columbia Road. Grand Forks Emergency Management officials report that by April 29 city engineers hope to have one million gallons of water coming into Grand Forks daily by back feeding water through a pipeline near the Grand Forks Air Force Base.

N.D. National Guard crews on April 25 were assisting Pembina County residents living

along the Red River with sandbagging and evacuation efforts. Downstream in Grand Forks, National Guard forces have shifted gears from response measures to securing evacuated areas and assisting with debris removal and transporting residents to their homes. In Fargo and in Wahpeton, National Guard members were directing traffic, assisting with debris removal and providing dike security. Missions in progress number 67. The National Guard has two missions pending and has completed 188. Personnel on duty April 25 included 732 Army Guard and 110 Air Guard members.

Seven carcass removal teams were in the field on April 25 removing and burying dead livestock. One team is working with carcasses found in waterways and is equipped with an air boat, four-wheel drive pickup and other specialized equipment. The N.D. Department of Agriculture reports that personnel are now required to wear protective clothing, face masks, goggles and gloves. To date, crews have removed 750 carcasses from waterways and have buried 2,094. Approximately 90,000 head of livestock perished during the April 4-6 blizzard.

The N.D. Department of Health officials are coordinating the Red Cross to supplement the relief agency's cleanup kits with such items as bleach, liquid cleaners, heavy-duty cleaning gloves, heavy-duty scrub brush, safety goggles, dust masks, bags of rags, and trash can liners. In other activities, the agency has received 2,000 additional doses of tetanus and 500 doses are scheduled to arrive next week. Grand Forks public health nurses have moved to temporary quarters in South Grand Forks. The public health office should receive 20,000 additional copies of the Centers for Disease Control flood information brochure on April 28.

Air crews from the N.D. Game and Fish Department, the N.D. Highway Patrol and the N.D. Civil Air Patrol are continuing security flights over Grand Forks. In addition, the CAP flew

surveillance flights for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), State Water Commission and the National Guard.

Lake Region Human Services Center in Devils Lake has set up a flood victims' counseling center at the University of North Dakota (UND) -- Lake Region campus. The agency is providing mental health, addiction, and medication services, psychological support and stress counseling. Also in response to flooding-related problems, Medicaid eligibility workers have arrived in Bismarck to assist the state Department of Human Services, allowing staff at the Grand Forks and Pembina Counties' Social Services offices to concentrate on immediate needs within their counties.

The Grand Forks/Red River Flood Information Center in Minot continues to provide assistance to flood evacuees. During a meeting April 25, evacuees were assisted by representatives of the city of Minot, Job Service North Dakota, Jobs Corps, Souris River Telephone, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Grand Forks County Commission, Grand Forks Public Schools and the Red Cross. A critical incident debriefing session for evacuees was held on April 24. The Ward County Commission held a special session on April 25 and authorized two deputies to assist with security efforts in Grand Forks.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: North Dakota residents with disaster-related damages can apply for individual assistance programs by contacting the National Teleregistration Center (NTC) at (800) 462-9029. The N.D. Department of Agriculture operates an Agriculture Disaster Response

Center for farmers coping with damages and losses caused by the disaster. The toll-free number is (888) 337-8632. Job Service North Dakota has received approval for Disaster Unemployment Assistance. Applicants are asked to call their local Job Service office or call (800) 472-2222.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the N.D. Division of Emergency Management, and volunteer relief agencies have established a donations coordination hotline, (800) 809-1450. Other volunteer donation hotlines are: American Red Cross, (800) FLOODND; the Salvation Army, (800) SALARMY; Seventh Day Adventists, (800) 381-7171; and United Methodist Council on Relief (UMCOR), (800) 814-8765.

The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>". The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The N.D. Department of Agriculture also posts flood-related information on its home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/agr/>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbmk.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

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